

Ulugh Beg

1393-1449



Reproduction of Ulugh Beg's visage

Background Details



- Ulugh Beg was born in modern-day Iran to an Uzbek family
- His nickname, *Ulugh Beg*, means “great ruler”
- His real name was *Mirza Mohammad Tāregh bin Shāhrokh*
- He was the grandson of a great conqueror and his mother was a noble woman
- He is known for his capable leadership and contributions to math and astronomy

Early Life



- Ulugh Beg became the ruler of a large amount of land at the young age of 18 where he moved the intellectual center of the territory to Samarkhand (UZ)
- He also built a *madrasa*, an Islamic school, based on the teachings of the *Koran*, the holy book of Muslims
- In 1428 he built a very large observatory where his study of the stars began

Contributions to Astronomy



- By working in his observatory, Ulugh Beg cataloged 994 stars in his work *Zij-i-Sultani* in 1437
- The catalog of stars was quite important and was used by other astronomers until the 17th century.
- He determined that a year has 365 days
- He also determined the tilt of the Earth, which remains the most accurate to this day



Soviet Stamp commemorating 550 years of Ulugh Beg's observatory

Contributions to Math



- Beg is also important for his contributions to trigonometry
- He wrote accurate trigonometry tables for sine and tangent values correct at least eight decimal places.

Death and Legacy



- Following his death, his contributions to math and science were forgotten
- His legacy was rehabilitated by a relative who was founder of the Mughal Empire, a territory primarily located in Northern India
- The moon crater, Ulugh Beigh, was named after Beg by German astronomer Johann Heinrich von Mädler

For Further Reading:



- **Ulugh Beg Biography:**
 - http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/Biographies/Ulugh_Beg.html
- **The Legacy of Ulugh Beg:**
 - http://vlib.iue.it/carrie/texts/carrie_books/paksoy-2/cam6.html